

## Fall Miniconferences Scheduled

Just a reminder, ASCC will be sponsoring two miniconferences this fall. The first is scheduled on **September 19<sup>th</sup>** in Magnolia on the Southern Arkansas University campus. The second is scheduled for **October 10<sup>th</sup>** at the Jones Center in Springdale.

Each conference will feature Dr. Tom Kiser, ASCC Medical Director and Associate Professor in the Rehabilitation Medicine Department at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and SCI Team Physician at Baptist Health Rehabilitation Center in Little Rock.



Other session topics will include dealing with depression, preventing Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), tai chi, and returning to work with Medicaid coverage, among others.

Miniconference programs will be finalized and registration forms will be available on our ASCC website in mid-August. Clients in the regions of the conferences will be mailed registration information in advance of the conferences. Others may contact our offices at **800-1459-1517** for a copy.

Registration will be \$10 for clients and family members and \$20 for health care and social service professionals. Scholarships will be available for clients and family members. So, mark your calendar and plan to attend!

## New Medicare Guidelines for Intermittent Catheter Use

Effective April 1, 2008, the four US regional Medicare Administrative Contractors implemented a new reimbursement policy covering the use of intermittent catheters. The main policy change now allows an intermittent catheter user a maximum of 200 catheters per month instead of four catheters per month under previous policy. This is great news for many intermittent catheter users who have been required to wash or rinse a single use catheter to reuse it many times.

However, users will still be required to provide adequate medical justification and physician's prescription for the increased number of catheters. While 200 is the maximum, it is not automatic that the user will receive that many. The actual number will be based on physicians' orders for frequency of catheterizations. Specific conditions, such as two serious urinary tract infections (UTIs) in the past year or women who are pregnant and have neurogenic bladders must be documented to qualify for the increase.

This is good news for many individuals with spinal cord injuries who have Medicare coverage. The change may help reduce urinary tract infections and improve the quality of life for intermittent catheter users. Ask your medical supply provider or your physician to learn how this change may affect you.

### In this issue...

I CAN! Dance Group	Page 3
Spina Bifida Assoc. News	Page 3
SAILS Playday Offers Fun!	Page 3
Pressure Sores	Page 4
Four Arkansans Head to 2008 Paralympic Games	Page 5
2008-09 Schedule for Disabled Hunters	Page 5
Dominique Briggs Wins "Super Joe" Award	Page 6
Spina Bifida Assoc. Award	Page 6
Campers Enjoy New Amenities at Aldersgate	Page 6
Wheelchair Basketball Tournament Scores Big	Page 7
Message Board Starts Slow	Page 7
The Squeaky Wheel	Page 8

## SPINAL COURIER

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## With Thanks

Donations this quarter from:

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*In Memory of Louis Gaeeswicz IV*

**Barbara and John Kutke**

**Agnes Majilton**

ASCC accepts tax-deductible donations. Contributions are used to assist our clients through purchases of equipment and educational resources. To make a contribution, please contact ASCC at **501-296-1788 / 1-800-459-1517** (voice) / **501-296-1794** (TDD), or send your donation to:

**AR Spinal Cord Commission  
1501 N. University, Suite 470  
Little Rock, AR 72207**

## From the Director

What is the hardest word for you to say? I didn't have to think long. For me it is one of the shortest words in our language: "No." I hate to tell people no. Consequently, I find my self buying stuff from neighbor kids and taking on lots of extra volunteer jobs. I don't know why no is so hard – perhaps it is the look on folks' faces when you have to say it.

One thing I do know, here at the Commission we will be using my least favorite word more often than we want to, as the new fiscal year begins July 1<sup>st</sup>. As most of us are aware, the economy has slowed down and that means taxes and fees paid to the state slow down too. Since our Commission is funded primarily by state general revenue, we have taken cuts. This year those cuts are big. Our funds for client services have seen a 25 percent cut from last year. We hope this is temporary, but we will have to plan as if it isn't.

That means that we will be unable to help one in four folks who have needs. There just won't be funds to pay. Over the years, we have been able to say, "Yes, but it may be a few months...." This year, in some cases, we will have to just say, "No, we can't buy it."



Our Case Managers don't like the word no any more than I do. It is going to be hard for them to tell folks whom we have helped with medical supplies, repairs, wheelchairs, and ramps in the past, no this time. We will all be 'tightening our belts.' That means we may have to repair instead of replace equipment. We may have to tell you that we can't replace your wheelchair this time—you will need

to use your Medicare or Medicaid benefits. That may not allow the equipment you are used to having, but it may be the only option. We may have to use loaner or recycled equipment to replace what you need. We may help you look to other resources for ramps or other services. But, sometimes, we may not be able to find a good option.

The Commission has been around for 33 years, helping people with spinal cord disabilities find services that they need to live productive lives. This year, that will be a harder job, but we are committed to get it done—one way or another. You can help by being proactive. Making your supplies stretch as best you can. Keeping your wheelchair maintained and clean. Taking care of your cushion to prevent damage, washing the covers to make them last. The same kind of things we are all doing every day to make ends meet in all parts of our lives.

I trust that this is temporary, and when we have more resources we will be able to go back to saying "yes" more often than "no!" Thanks in advance, for working with us to stretch those dollars we have as far as they can go!

*Cheryl L. Vines*

## I CAN! Dance Group Wins Awards at National Dance Competition

The I CAN! Dance group from A Time to Dance studio in East End won awards at the national Platinum Dance Competition held in Panama City, FL, June 11-14. The I CAN! Dance class is offered free for children with disabilities.

Katie Mayberry, 6, and Shawn Morehart, 12, won the Platinum Award – the highest honor in a category – in the Recreational Junior Ballet Division.

“I’m very proud of these girls,” said Julie Mayberry, owner of A Time to Dance. “They worked very hard and did an excellent job. Our hope through this competition is that we will inspire other dance teachers across the United States to start a similar program at their school of dance. We want others to see what these children CAN DO and not what they can’t do.”

Katie Mayberry, who was born with spina bifida and is mobile with a wheelchair, and Morehart, who was born with Down’s Syndrome, are part of the I CAN! Dance class,



*Katie Mayberry, Shawn Morehart and Carissa Garner demonstrate their winning style.*

along with Carissa Garner, age 4, who also has spina bifida. Garner, who holds the title of Little Miss Wheelchair Arkansas, regularly performs with the group but was unable to compete due to illness. Mayberry and Morehart received a standing ovation from the

audience of approximately 300 people, according to Platinum Dance Competition Director Ron Rogers. “There wasn’t a dry eye in the place. Julie and these girls are welcome back (to the competition) anytime,” said Rogers.

## Spina Bifida Association News

The Spina Bifida Association of Arkansas (SBAAR) provides services to individuals with spina bifida and their families in Arkansas. ASCC and SBAAR work closely on many activities and programs.

- The SBAAR provides financial assistance for individuals and families to attend the Spina Bifida Association of America national conference each year. In June, the Kramer family of Dover and the Mangus family from Batesville represented Arkansas at the 2008 conference in Tucson, AZ.

- SBAAR offers four \$1,000 scholarships for Arkansans with Spina

Bifida who are attending college or formal training programs. Applications for 2008 scholarships are due August 15, 2008. To obtain a scholarship application, call the SBAAR office at 501-978-SBAA.

- The Association is also planning a Family Fun Day in October to celebrate Spina Bifida month. Date and location will be coming soon. ASCC clients who have spina bifida will receive flyers with the information in the next few months.

If you would like to join SBAAR, annual dues are \$20 per individual or family. Call 501-978-SBAA for a membership application.

## SAILS Playday Offers Outdoor Fun!

The Spa Area Independent Living Services (SAILS) has scheduled its annual Playday at Lake DeGray on **Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. There will be fun and games, jet ski rides and lake tours provided by DeGray Park Service.

Playday is an opportunity for people with disabilities and their families to get out of the house and enjoy the great outdoors! A hot dog lunch will be served.

Please call SAILS at **501-624-7710** for more information.



# Pressure Sores

By Tom Kiser, M.D., ASCC Medical Director

Pressure sores are caused by prolonged pressure over an area of your pelvis or feet resulting in a loss of blood supply to the muscle and skin. If the pressure is not relieved in 20 to 30 minutes, it can result in death to that tissue. Once the tissue is dead, the only way to treat the sore is to remove the dead tissue by debridement with surgery or dressing changes over the sore to remove the dead tissue.

The goal of pressure sore treatment is to remove all the dead tissue; because dead or necrotic tissue is only food for bacteria increasing the risk of infection and slowing the healing process. Once the dead tissue is gone, good, healing, granulation tissue (red and beefy) will develop to fill in for the missing dead tissue. The wound will slowly close from the edge to the center as skin cells migrate from the edges of the wound across the granulation tissue.

The best and cheapest way to treat a pressure sore is to prevent it from happening in the first place. That is why from day one, when you arrived at the rehabilitation hospital, you were instructed to do pressure relief maneuvers about 4 times an hour when sitting up and to turn every 2 hours when in bed. Your risk for a pressure sore is the highest when you are sick and immobile. That is why it is very important that you have a family member or significant other go with you if you are ever admitted to a hospital for an illness or surgery. That person can advocate for you to ensure you are turned and positioned in the bed properly and get a special mattress on the bed if you need one.

About 30 percent of patients get a pressure sore when they are ini-

tially injured, and at any one time about 30 percent of spinal cord patients have a pressure sore when seen in a clinic. About 80 percent of pressure sores are on the pelvis (sacrum, ischium or trochanter) and about 20 percent are on the feet. It is important to wear protective footwear to protect the feet from bumps and scrapes. The shoes should be big enough to accommodate any swelling due to dependent edema.

Here are some suggestions to decrease your risk and incidence of pressure sores:

1. Develop a habit of pressure relief. Make it part of your routine and life to do frequent pressure relief exercises by moving side to side, tilting or reclining your chair

(if you have a power tilt or recline), or doing wheelchair pushups. If this becomes a habit, your chances of developing a pressure sore are greatly reduced.

2. Check your skin at least daily. Use a handheld mirror or have a loved one check your skin. This will detect any problems early and help you take the appropriate steps to remedy the problem. If you buy new shoes or get a new mattress, you may want to check the skin about 30 minutes to an hour after trying the new mattress or wearing the new shoes.

3. Always try to sit on a good wheelchair cushion, but if you must sit on another type of surface, do your pressure relief technique more frequently and check your skin



ASCC Medical Director Tom Kiser, M.D.

later that day to ensure nothing bad happened to the skin.

4. Be careful of heat. Some of my patients have developed sores when their legs or feet were too close to the heater in their home or the heater of a car. Check the bathtub water for temperature with a sensate hand prior to putting your feet in the water. Also, when transporting a hot dish from the stove to the table, always use some type of protective hot pad or towel.

5. If you are having problems with frequent bladder or bowel incontinence, see your SCI physician or urologist to address the incontinence to prevent developing a pressure sore.

By being diligent about skin care you provide a large safety margin between you and the development of a pressure sore. As you grow older, your skin will become less tough and resilient, and you will need a bigger safety margin to avoid a pressure sore.

Some of my patients avoided pressure sores for years, then suddenly developed a large pressure sore even though nothing had changed. The only thing that had changed is that they grew older; so do not cut corners in following your pressure sore prevention regimen. The safety margin you develop now will pay big dividends in the future.

**... the best and cheapest way to treat a pressure sore is to prevent it ...**

## Four Arkansans head to the 2008 Paralympic games in Beijing, China

Arkansans Mary Allison Milford, Grover Evans, Jeff Glasbrenner and Scott Jones will be part of the team of 206 Team USA athletes headed to the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing, China. The thirteenth Paralympic Games will be held September 6–17, 2008. This is the first Olympics or Paralympics to be held in mainland China. Under the motto 'One world, one dream,' athletes with physical disabilities will compete in twenty Paralympics sports. Over 2,000 athletes with disabilities are expected to compete in this year's games, which will follow the Olympic games by one month, in the same venues.

Milford, who has paraplegia, is competing in her first Paralympics as a member of the US women's wheelchair basketball team. She was a member of the USA women's team who won the gold at the 2006 World championships and will be trying to capture Paralympic gold in Beijing. Mary Allison is a student at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Evans, who has quadriplegia, will compete in swimming. He has qualified for three events. At 56, he is the oldest swimmer and perhaps the oldest athlete on the team. This is his third Paralympic trip; his first was 16 years ago at the 1992 event in Barcelona. His goal this time is to win a medal. Grover is a Program Manager with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services/Workforce Education in Little Rock.



Glasbrenner, an amputee, has been a key member of the US men's

wheelchair basketball team for nearly a decade. This will also be his third Paralympics. He competed on the 2000 team that took bronze in Sydney and the 2004 team in Athens. This year, the team is looking for gold! When he is not training, Jeff is a motivational speaker and disability consultant.

Scott Jones, who has a visual impairment, will compete in Judo at the 81 kg. level. Jones is the only returning member of the 2004 Paralympic Judo Team and has moved down from 90 kg to 81 kg since Athens. A three-time World Team member, Jones will be looking for his first international medal. Scott lives in Little Rock and works as an Operations Analyst with Dillards, Inc.

Join us in cheering on these Arkansans as they represent the USA in September. Media coverage of the Paralympics is not extensive but you can keep up with the team on the US Paralympics website [www.paralympics.usoc.org](http://www.paralympics.usoc.org).

## 2008-09 Schedule for Disabled Hunters

From the list below, pick one or more hunts you are interested in and call the contact person for an application. All applications must be received by August 15, 2008. The drawing for actual hunt participants will be held on September 9, 2008.

Location	Date	Contact	Phone
Greeson	October 10 - 11	Marty Reynolds	870-285-2151 ext. 5003
Mt. Home	October 20 - 22	Bruce Caldwell	870-425-2700
Nimrod	October 21- 22	Jesse Palmer	501-324-5765 ext. 122
Greers Ferry	October 21 - 23	Jason Parsley	501-362-2416
Clearwater, MO	October 25 - 26	Doug Stiltz	573-223-7777
Beaver Lake	October 25 -26	Alan Bland	479-636-1210 ext. 313
DeGray	October 27 - 29	Jeff Lockwood	870-246-5501
Clarksville	November 1 - 2	Greig Moe	479-968-5008 ext. 268
Cooks Lake - Women	November 14 - 16	Matt Conner	870-282-8249
AR Post	November 26 - 28	Webb Palmer	870-534-0451
DeQueen	December 2 - 4	Victor Kuykendall	870-584-4161
Cooks Lake	December 12 - 14	Matt Conner	870-282-8249
DeGray Duck	January 3 - 4	Jeff Lockwood	870-246-5501
Columbia, LA (1)	To Be Announced	Tony Porter	318-949-1804 ext. 103
Columbia, LA (2)	To Be Announced	Tony Porter	318-949-1804 ext. 103





### Dominique Briggs Wins "Super Joe" Award

This year's "Super Joe" Leadership Award was won by Dominique Briggs. The award is given by the Camp Aldersgate Counselor Staff to the camper who exhibits the most leadership, enthusiasm, character, positive attitude and accomplishments during camp week.

Congratulations Dominique!



### Spina Bifida Association Recipient of Gift

The Spina Bifida Association of Arkansas (SBAAR) recently received a gift of \$15,000 from the Central Arkansas Corvette Club. Jerry Reagan (above right), president of the club, presented Vicki Rucker, SBAAR secretary, with a check at this year's spina bifida camp. The funds will be used to support SBAAR activities. The Corvette Club has sponsored SBAAR for a number of years.

## Campers Enjoy New Amenities at Camp Aldersgate

Participants at this year's camp were among the first to use Camp Aldersgate's recently updated facilities.



Everybody's favorite was the new swimming pool—a great place to cool off on a hot day. Getting into and out of the pool couldn't be easier. There are extra wide steps for those who are independently mobile and a wheelchair ramp for those who need a little more assistance.



Campers slept well in new air-conditioned cabins and enjoyed their free time in the adjacent screened-in porches.

The closing ceremony marked another completed year but memories to share for a lifetime.

Spina Bifida Camp is a collaborative program supported by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, Camp Aldersgate and MedCamps of Arkansas. Campers must be between the ages of 6 and 16 and have a spinal cord disability.



Forty-three kids attended camp this year. If you would like to participate next year, be sure to look for details in our January 2009 newsletter, talk with your Case Manager, or contact Mary Jo Stanton at (501) 296-1788 or (800) 459-1517 or by e-mail at [mjstanton@arspinalcord.org](mailto:mjstanton@arspinalcord.org).

## New Book Available in the Resource Center

Written by the former director of the Spinal Cord Research and Education Foundation of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, *Alternative Medicine and Spinal Cord Injury* is the first book to cover alternative therapies commonly used by people with SCI.

The book provides detailed descriptions on a variety of healing methods/therapies including its history, case studies, additional readings and references. The topics covered include herbal medicine and aromatherapy, acupuncture, magnetic healing, chiropractic healing, dolphin-assisted therapy, spirituality and many others. This book is an essential resource for those living with a spinal cord injury and considering an alternative medicine approach to improve their quality of life.

*Alternative Medicine and Spinal Cord Injury* by Laurence Johnston, PhD, is available for check out at no charge from The McCluer Education and Resource Center on Spinal Cord Injury in the Little Rock office. The Resource Center not only carries books, magazines, articles and newsletters but also videos, audiotapes and website information on a variety of topics concerning spinal cord disability. For more information call the resource center at **501-296-1792** or **800-459-1517**.



The UCA Physical Therapy team proudly display their first place trophy.

## Wheelchair Basketball Tournament Scores Big

The second annual Rollin Round the Rim wheelchair basketball tournament was held at Arkansas Technical University (ATU) April 18, 2008. Thirty-nine 5-member teams participated in this year's event. Teams consisted of students, instructors, administration and community professionals. Two local universities were in attendance this year with ATU pledging to participate next year. Spectators included ATU students, residents from three local long-term care facilities and Marva Workshop as well as ASCC clients and their families.

The University of Arkansas at Conway (UCA) Physical Therapy team

won the tournament with the UCA Occupational Therapy Chairbears taking second place.

The event is designed to increase awareness of wheelchair accessibility issues in the community. Hopefully the tournament participants will have a better understanding of what it is like to be in a wheelchair and will help make their community more accessible for individuals with disabilities.

The tournament raised over \$1,000 for Disability Services on the ATU Campus. See you in the stands or perhaps on the court at next year's tournament!

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## Message Board Off to a Slow Start

What if you gave a party and no one came? That's where the ASCC Message Board finds itself. The Board opened for business several months ago and it was expected to do a bustling business. However, only a few clients have signed up for the free service.

The message board is a place where members can ask questions

and get answers from other members. Or, members can exchange views on a wide variety of subjects related to spinal cord disability.

Obviously the bulletin board is only as valuable as the people who use it. The more people online, then the more resources there are to share among all the members.

ASCC Research Manager Tom Farley said, "It takes time to get a new service off the ground, but we think it will gain momentum over the next year and become a valuable resource for the community."

Share your knowledge at the ASCC Message Board:  
[www.websitetoolbox.com/mb/ascc](http://www.websitetoolbox.com/mb/ascc)





# The Squeaky Wheel

The squeaky wheel . . . gets the grease! This column is about grease—things that make life for persons with spinal cord disability go smoother and ease your way in the world. “Things” can be hints, equipment adaptations, innovations, tricks-of-the-trade, procedural shortcuts, life experiences, or things you “should have done but didn’t.”

ASCC Case Manager Toney Lequieu of Russellville, AR provides tips for maintaining a manual wheelchair.

Tips for maintaining a happy and safe manual wheelchair:

Once a week, check your tire pressure, as well as the wheel locks. Low tire pressure decreases the effectiveness of the wheel locks. Inflate the tires to the proper level to ensure a secure lock.

Every three months, check all fasteners for wear and tightness. If needed, tighten them. Check for problems with your quick release axles, axle sleeves, frame, wheels,

tires and spokes. Also check the front casters, anti-tip tubes, armrests and upholstery. Correct all problems or have your chair serviced by an authorized supplier. To increase the life of the wheel bearings, remove all debris from around the front and rear axles.

Once a year, have your chair serviced by an authorized supplier.

You can increase the life of your chair by regularly cleaning it. This also helps you detect and repair

minor problems before they turn into major ones. Clean your chair by hand, using a mild soap and let it drip dry. Machine washing and drying the fabric and upholstery can cause damage. To protect the paint you may want to coat it with a non-abrasive auto wax.

As a side note, your chair doesn’t need to be greased or oiled at all!

Hopefully these tips will help keep your chair in good repair and you safe all year long.

We invite you to send in your helpful hint—your bit of “grease.” Contact your ASCC Case Manager, write us at *Spinal Courier*, Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, 1501 N. University, Suite 400, Little Rock, AR 72207 or e-mail us at [courier@arspinalcord.org](mailto:courier@arspinalcord.org) and put “Squeaky Wheel” in the subject line.

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